

humiliation saved a single American life or led to the capture of any major terrorist."

The abuse of detainees in U.S. custody has severely undermined our Nation's position in the world. And yet congressional Republicans are still unwilling to call for an independent investigation to determine what exactly is happening in these prisons.

How can we possibly regain our credibility in the world until we actually investigate the possibilities of abuse? We still do not know why these abuses took place.

RONNIE EARLE AND ETHICS

(Mr. MCHENRY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MCHENRY. Mr. Speaker, I may be new to Washington politics. I may be new to this partisan game played here. But it appears to me there is more politics masquerading in legalese and ethics today.

The coordinated attack strategy by the Democrat leadership against our Republican leadership has been shown for what it is, once again. It is a political side show with partisanship as its base that is attempting to assassinate our good leaders' on the Republican side rights.

Yesterday's National Review reports that Ronnie Earle, the Texas prosecutor who is the designated hit man for the Democrats, has been indicting several companies over alleged campaign finance violations. But he dropped those charges when they would pay and make contributions to his pet projects, his pet causes. An end for those charges, those contributions, have been made. Dollars for dismissal, Mr. Speaker. Pay off the left-wing prosecutor with big donations to pretty pink projects, and they might get off the hook.

It turns out that the prosecutor has also been on a witch hunt against our leadership, and he has, in fact, appeared at Democrat fundraisers to brag about. It is more Democrat side show politics, and that is what this is all about.

REPUBLICAN ABUSES OF POWER: REPUBLICANS DO NOT WANT ETHICS COMMITTEE TO MEET

(Mr. BUTTERFIELD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Speaker, last week the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY), majority leader, blamed House Democrats for the fact that the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct has still been unable to hear the case against him. Mr. Speaker, House Democrats are trying to abide by the rules that this House passed at the beginning of the year. It is the Republicans and the chairman who refuse to follow the rules. They want to ap-

point a partisan staff director to lead their efforts on the committee despite House rules that explicitly state staffers be nonpartisan professionals.

The Committee on Standards of Official Conduct is supposed to be a place where Members can get straight, unbiased, trustworthy ethics guidance. How can Members who might have disagreements with the House leadership feel comfortable going to the committee for advice if they fear committee staff members are incapable of performing their official duties in a nonpartisan fashion?

I wonder, Mr. Speaker, why the Republicans want to appoint partisan staffers to the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct. Could it be that they like a partisan staffer in a room when decisions are made about certain Members of this House? We have to wonder.

SOCIAL SECURITY REFORM

(Mr. PENCE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, Social Security reform is an idea whose time has come. And thanks to the leadership of President George W. Bush, we are engaged in a national conversation about addressing the long-term 21st century challenges that the Social Security system faces when some 40 million retirees become 80 million retirees.

The American people, candidly, Mr. Speaker, have not agreed on what the right thing to do is yet. But most of my constituents know that we ought to stop doing the wrong thing. It has simply been wrong these last 4 decades for the Congress of the United States to take the Social Security surplus and apply it to spending on big government.

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We need to stop raiding the Social Security trust fund. Use those resources to give younger Americans voluntary personal savings accounts and that will begin the reform of this critical entitlement. Let us stop the raid on the Social Security trust funds. Let us give younger Americans more choice. It is time to reform Social Security. Let the debate begin.

REALITY DISCONNECT

(Ms. SCHAKOWSKY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, at a time when the Bush administration continues to paint a rosy picture of the situation in Iraq, Congress should really be investigating why exactly the administration is misleading both the American public and Members of this institution.

While most Republicans in this Chamber continue to take the Bush administration's rhetoric as fact, Repub-

lican Senator CHUCK HAGEL of Nebraska states in this week's U.S. News and World Report: "The White House is completely disconnected from reality. It's like they're just making it up as they go along."

That is a Republican Senator. It would be nice if other Republicans would follow suit. For some reason Republicans think they are supporting troops in Iraq if they remain silent about what is going on there. Are Republicans supporting our troops when they refuse to question misleading statements like that from Vice President CHENEY that the Iraqi insurgents are in their "last throes"? Are Republicans supporting our troops when they refuse to support investigation into prisoner abuse scandals, scandals that many, including former Secretary of State Colin Powell, believe are harming both our reputation and our troops?

Silence is not the best way to help our troops.

FALLEN HEROES CAMPAIGN

(Mr. STEARNS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, I wish to praise the admirable actions of First Coast Energy Shell Corporation, a Jacksonville-based company from my congressional district.

During the third annual Tribute to Heroes campaign, First Coast Energy Shell has pledged to raise \$75,000 for the Intrepid Fallen Heroes Fund. This fund provides military families whose loved ones have been killed or wounded in Iraq or Afghanistan with financial and emotional support.

Beginning on Memorial Day and continuing through the Fourth of July, First Coast Energy Shell will donate a portion of all gasoline sales to this fund. I share in First Coast Energy's belief that "the military is an important part of our community" and that we should all actively support and honor those heroes who have sacrificed so much for our country.

I am proud to represent such patriotic and generous constituents and strongly urge my fellow Members to visit www.fallenheroesfund.org to learn more about this very good campaign.

GREAT SOCIAL SECURITY PLAN

(Mr. DEFAZIO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, well, I welcome the born again saviors of Social Security on the Republican side of the aisle. They have been looting the program for years, and now they want to make it right.

The President this year will borrow \$168 billion from Social Security, money only extracted from people who work for wages and salary, and will transfer part of it to the wealthiest in